

An *After-Reckoning* with

Mr. Edwards:

O R,

A true and sober answer, to a
false accusation; wherein (among
other things) is shewed the unlawfulness
of giving the name of *Church* to an
House made of Lime and Stone; and the
name of CHURCHES to
Parochiall Congregations.

Written by *Benjamin Cox*, Master of Arts, being one of
them whom Master *Edwards* hath abused, unjustly calling
them *Self-ries*, *Time-servers*, and *Innovators*, in his *Gangrena*, or Book of Slanders.

JER. 20. 16.

I heard the defaming of many, feare on every side: Report, say they; and we
will report it.

2 COR. 6. 4. 8.

In all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God —
By honour, and dishonour, by evil report, and good report, as deceivers, and
yet true.

L O N D O N;

Printed by *R. White*, for *Giles Calvert*, at the Black-
spread. E. gl., near the West end of *Pauls*. 1 46.



Mr. EDWARDS,



Although your Book of Slanders, by you entitled *Gangrena*, hath been answered by divers of those whom you have therein abused: Yet in as much as you have endeavoured to defame Me also in that Book, in two severall places, and nothing hath been particularly answered thereunto, it seems to be a meet and just thing, that you should hear a word also from me. I judge it no honour to encounter with such a man as you by your writing appear to be, not caring whom you abuse and slander: Yet remembring what is written in *Prov.* 19. 25. and 26. 5. I have thought it convenient to give you this ensuing Answer; partly (I confesse) lest in the apprehension of some, my silence should argue a guiltines of that whereof you accuse mee; but principally (if my heart deceive mee not) because I perceive that your drift in slandering me, is to disgrace the way of God in which I endeavour to walk. And observing the continuance and increase of the evill of your heart, and way, which hath appeared abundantly, not only by your reprinting of your *Gangrena*, but also by your adding more thereunto; and discerning also some to be so foolish as to magnifie your folly, and you therein, (though impartial Readers do shew their loathing thereof, and the wiser sort of your friends are ashamed of it:) I have resolved no longer to deferre the publishing of this my Answer, and do now send it forth to the view of the world, committing it to the censure of every discrete and indifferent Reader.

THe first place, in which I find you naming me, is in *pag*
the first edition of the first Part of your *Way and There*
have these words: *The full relation of the Time-serving, and*
innovations of Den; Cox, Ellis of Colchester, Dr. Holms, Salts
Cummius, Wale of Norfolk, cum multis aliis, Would make
Book.

Scilicet, You could easily fill a new Book, as you have done
with false and slanderous accusations of such Time-serving, and
innovations, as we are as truly guilty of as *Nabab* was of blasphemy.
No wonder that you were so free in your promise to write
so frequently, being so stored with matter.

The next, and last place in which I find you mentioning me
pag 95. & 96. of the same Book, where your words are
One Mr. Cox, who came out of Devonshire. &c.

What's the reason of this alteration? Before it was *Dr.*
Ellis, &c. Now, *One Mr. Cox, &c.* It seems at last you remember
that I had sometimes been a man of your own coat; *Arm*
Bishop, whom you and some others have now metamorphosed
a *Presbyter*, having laid his hand on my head as well as yours
therefore now it is *Mr. Cox*. And if I could handsomely change
following the example of the *Epistles* that you have printed, of
you, *Good Mr. E D. & A R D S, Worthy Sir, Reverend Sir*
were then probable that I should still be *Mr. Cox*, at every
But as I account it no dishonour to be degraded or slighted by
Pen, so neither do I account it any honour to have from me
title implying respect; it being so familiar with you to com-
them that fear God, and to honour vile persons.

You add: *An Innovator, and great Time-server in this*
time. And here you speak of me as truly, and as charitably, as
tullius spoke of *Paul*, when he said of him, *We have found a*
pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews thro
the World, and a Ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, Ac
Touching your numbring me here among those whom you
ted to call *Scoundrels*, (for so you do) you are no more able to
me a *Scoundrel*, then *Terentius* was able to prove *Paul* to be the
leader of a sect. And my true and direct answer hereunto shall
be much unlike to *Pauls*, in *Act. 23. 1.* *After the way which*

call Heresie (or Sect) so worship I the God of Israel, believing all things that are written in the Scriptures. Touching Innovations, I shall hear more from you, and you from me, by and by.

Touching my *Time-serving*, it partly appeared when I lived in London, in the year 1618. when that base and licentious Pamphlet, that proclaimed liberty for prophane sports on the *Lords da*, came forth in King James his name. For then (according as my conscience directed me) both in the publike Meeting-house of great *A halloms*, where I was then *Lecturer* and also at *Pauls crosse*, I did in my publike Preaching openly and earnestly reprove and condemn, as prophane and hatefull, those things to which liberty and commendation was given in that Pamphlet: so that it was admired at, that the Persecutors of those times did not then violently seize upon me.

Afterwards when I was *Lecturer* at *Barstaple*, (which was the first place in *Devonshire* that I lived in) my *Time-serving* farther appeared by my open and sharp reproving of my *Fellow-Ministers* (as we then called one another) for their scandalous life, their not Preaching, and their preaching loose and false doctrine: whereby I incurred the hatred of the prophane and Prelatical crew. It appeared also by my reproving and condemning of their Doctrine, who held *bare Reading* to be that *Preaching* which is required of a *Minister*. And by my justifying that Reproof, when I was questioned for it; and by my renewing and confirming of the same in a *publike Sermon*, when a *Rean-tion* was required and expected. It appeared also by my bold declaring of the intolerable baseness of *Stage-Playes* (though then going about with the *Kings* license) and my sharp reproving of the Magistrates for suffering them, and of others for seeing their Playes, and countenancing them: whereby I exceedingly angered the *prophane Centry* in the adjacent parts of the country, and the prophane ones in the Town, both *Magistrates* and others. For which also I was convented before Bishop *Carey*, but never yielded to any acknowledgement of any fault herein, or any relinquishing of my oppoing of that baseness. It likewise appeared by my open reproving of the *Magistrates*, for their suffering Whoredome, and Adultery, and Drunkenness, and prophane Swearing, to go so much unpunished; and by my continual standing up for Godly persons, and their wayes, which did then lie under the contempt and reproach of the world. These things were not done

in a corner; neither can they be denied by my very enemies, who knew me at that time.

At my going off from *Warrington* I shewed my *Time-serving*, *Self-seeking*, by my leaving of that place, for another of lesse profit and lesse honour in the eye of the world; which was a place of a *Credit* in the same County of *Devon*, where I remained till my conscience would not permit me to possess any such place longer. To that place I then conceived myself to be called, not by the call of so many Pounds *per annum*, but by the desire and necessity of the people there. There my *Time-serving* did in like manner appear, by my preaching constantly against the *Arminian* errors notwithstanding the *Kings* Directions to the contrary; And against the prophanation of the *Lords day*, notwithstanding King *Charles* his reviving of the *base Pamphlet* aforespoken of, (which *Pamphlet* the Ministers about me did publicly read, yet I neither read myselfe, neither was it read by any other for me) and by my preaching against Altar-worship, and against divers other evils which at that time did favour, which my soul did (and still doth) abhor. Till in my latter time, my *Temporizing* did more fully appear by my preaching, that Episcopall Prelacy was a humane thing, and by giving to Bishop *Hall* a true and full coppie of that Sermon, who was questioned for it, & owning the same not onely before him, but also before the Arch-Prelate of *Cantebury*; and comming off from that businesse with such an Explication of my selfe, as had not any Recantation or Retracting of any one sentence that I had before delivered; and was immediately followed (in the same Sermon) with a sharp reproofe of those *Arminian tenets* that were then defended, and divers evils which were then countenanced. All this before this present Parliament.

Presently after this followed (as God gave in more light) my going away, and Preaching against the Ceremonies, laying aside the Service booke, and refusing to admit the mixt multitude to Communion; and at last, the leaving of my place, because I could not keep it with a quiet conscience.

And now, *Mr. Edwards* I freely confesse that I can not object to you any such time serving. And for my selfe, *If I am become in glorj'ing, you have compelled me.*

But this I freely confesse, not so much to you, as to the people.

God, into whose hands these lines shall come : that as through ignorance for a long time I swallowed (as well as others) the Bishops Ordinations, and Licenses, &c. and the Service-book, and *old conformity*, as you call it ; so in part of that time the expectation of a High-Commission suit, that I was threatened with, did make me for a season, through my weaknesse at that time, so exact in that Conformity, that I cannot now think of it without being ashamed. Yea and touching bowing at the name Iesus, I did for a while submit to that also, then seeing no more sin therein, then in the rest of that *old conformity*. But I still reprov'd those that urg'd it as a duty from Scripture ; and I never press'd any to it : and as soon as the Lord shewed me the evill of it, I did not only forbear it, but also preach against it in the same place where I had practis'd it ; preferring the glory of God before my own credit among men. Thus I am, and will be far, not only from denying any thing that is true, but also from justifying my selfe in any thing wherein I can see that I have failed. But truly when I now consider how far I was then from a good way, where I thought I had been right, I acknowledge it to be the wonderfull goodnesse of God unto me, that I did not then run much farther, and offend more grievously, then I did.

It follows in your booke, *That against the will of the Bishop of Excester, Doctor Hall his Diocesan brought in innovations into his Parish Church*. This is as true as the rest of your slanders. The things which I did in my Meeting House, which you call my Parish Church, which in likelihood the Bishop might not approve of, were these :

1. I constantly refused to read the Lessons appointed in the Service book, that were any part of the Apocrypha, and read only the *Canonical Scriptures* : & did ordinarily read the Scriptures in order, not taking here one Chapter, and there another, according to the direction of the Service book.

2. I usually expounded, sometimes more largely, and sometimes more briefly, the Chapters that I read, specially in my latter time, wherein I seldome read any part of the Scripture without expounding it.

3. When I read the Psalmes, and other parts of Scripture that were corruptly translated in the Service-booke, I used not that corrupt translation, but the best translation (as I conceived) that was extant.

4. I

4. I refused to use the corrupt Metaphrase of the Psalms was annexed to the service book; and not then seeing the usefulness of that way of singing, I used sometimes *King James's* Metaphrase, yet not without some corrections; sometimes (in use of some Psalms) a Metaphrase of mine own, and sometimes *Mr. Rowse's* Metaphrase when it was come forth.

5. I preached a weekly Lecture in my Publike Meeting without asking any leave of the Bishop so to do.

6. I did sometimes there keep publike Fasts without any either from the Bishop, or any other man.

7. I refused (at the last) to read or use the Fast books sent by the Prelates; and when a publike Fast was appointed by the Proclamation, I did not stay (as others did) for leave or order from the Bishop to observe it.

If I brought in any Innovations against the Bishops will, it be some of these things, or some such like. But I suppose, neither you nor your informers will now object unto me any such thing as an offensive Innovation. And though it be probable that *Bishop Hall* did not like some of these things, or would not have seemed to have liked them, if he had taken notice of them; yet (that I do him no wrong) he never gave me any reproof for any of these things, nor for any thing else, so far as I remember, saving once in preaching, that Prelatical Episcopacy was a Humane tradition whereat indeed he was exceedingly displeased. And how far he was from disliking me, as one bringing in Innovations against him, he did manifest, partly by setting me in the Lecture at *Towcester* which act of his he never recalled, but I continued enjoying the liberty of preaching that Lecture, till I my self (finding it a burden to me) did voluntarily give it over, partly also by appointing me to preach at the Assize in *Excester*, immediately upon his receiving a strict order from authority to be very circumspect in his choice of men for that service. I partly also by his ready and earnest applying himself to free me out of trouble, when I had been vehemently prosecuted by his Chancellor Doctor *Parris*, and began to be taken in the High Commission by one Mr. *Joh. Weeks*, for excepting against the said Mr. *Weeks* as an unfit person to be Clerk of the Court, though *Bishop Hall* himself had commended him to be chosen for that place; yea when in his last he had exposed me to no small danger (as he afterwards apprehended) by sending

Sermon to the Archbishop, in which I had declared his Episcopacy to be a Humane Ordinance, and I had taken my journey towards London to answer that matter, he himselfe sent after me, such letters of commendation, and of earnest request in my behalfe, as he thought would be most prevalent for my peace. And although he can neither be ignorant nor insensible of my utter disliking, and earnest opposing of that way which he hath both walked in, and pleaded for; yet I am so far perswaded of his respect to his conscience, credit, and honour, as that I dare referre this matter to his testimony, viz. whether this assertion of yours: That I brought in innovations into my Parish-Church, against the will of Dr. Hall my Diocesan, be not (as I affirme it to be) a meer calumniation.

But you have (as you pretend) your informers, that must then take this off from you, and beare it upon their own shoulders. And for this you have provided in this Parenthesis; (As some godly people that came out of those parts, have informed me) But why, I pray you, are the names of these Godly Informers concealed? Is it because if you should name any Godly men as the givers of such information, they would clear themselves, and declare you to be a liar? Or is it because your Informers, by you falsely called Godly, being conscious to themselves of their false dealing, have given you order to conceal their names, lest they should be discovered to have dealt dishonestly? deal plainly, Mr. Edwards; and if they cannot reprove you as a false reporter, I shall prove them to be slanderers.

But now some reader may now enquire in his thoughts; was there not something from which some might possibly (though not justly) take occasion to raise some such report? My true answer is this, When the Jews cried out against Paul, that he had brought Greeks into the Temple, and had polluted that holy place, Acts. 21. 28. there was something from which they took occasion to raise that clamour: For they had seen before with him in the City, Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into that Temple, ver. 29. So I suppose the case here stands with me in respect of two things.

First, In respect of the Communion Table (as men commonly call it) placed North and South, not East and West. Touching which, this is the true state of the businesse.

1. The Table was so placed long before there was any word spoken (that I heard of) of turning Tables into Altars: otherways I

should have given no consent to the placing of it in that manner. And it stood so a long time before there was any offence taken by any (that I did ever heare of) at the standing of it in that sort.

2. It was so placed meerly for convenience: the Chancell being very short, yea shorter (as I remember) then the Table it selfe, and yet of a sufficient breadth.

3. The Table was not placed Altar-wise, in as much as there was a seat between it and the East end of the Chancell, where people ordinarily sit, and at the time of the Communion that seat was made use of by the Communicants.

4. While the Table stood in that manner, I was so far in the favour of the Bishop, and had such frequent and familiar access to him, as that if I had therein done any thing against his minde, if he had known and taken notice of, he would lovingly have told of it. But he never so much as intimated the least dislike of any thing that I did in this thing.

5. All this time there was no Altar-worship, or bowing towards the Table there used: for as I alwayes shewed a detestation of that thing, so the people there did not use it, no not in the least measure.

6. VVhen I understood that some at last took offence at the standing of the Table, and put an ill construction upon it, though they were only strangers that did so, yet to remove the occasion of the offence, I caused that Table to be taken away, and a square Table to be set in the room of it.

Secondly, In respect of my reading some part of the Service sometime at that Table. Touching this, my true Apologie is as followes. 1. This thing also was done without any Altar worship, and without any looking upon one place as more holy then another, either by me, or by the people. 2. The meeting house was so square, and the Chancell so short, that the whole congregation could see me there, as well as in any other place. 3. Even this also was according to the old Conformity, as you call it, the Service-book then authorized by Parliament (as was then conceived) requiring this as in any other Conformity. 4. The occasion of my so doing, was the trouble and censure in the High-Commission Court, of one Dr. *Downe* for his *non Conformity*, this being a part of his *non-Conformity* that he was so troubled for, *viz.* his not reading the Service (as they called it) at the Communion-Table. This wrong

upon me, I being then in expectation of a High-Commission Suit, and knowing my selfe to be extreemly maligned by the malignant crew. 5. I was so far from doing this against the Bishops will, that I first advised with him before I did it & he understanding the fashion of my Meeting House did advise me to do it for my safety. Yet do I not now justify my selfe in this action: for though I then discerned no evill in it, yet is it one of those things of which I am now ashamed.

But suppose I had formerly been such a Time-server and Innovator, as you accuse me to have been: yea suppose I had been (as you by your writing now appear to be.) Suppose I had persecuted men for not coming to Divine Service, falsely so called, for not kneeling at the Communion, &c. Suppose I had been an Altar-worshipper, a setter up of Images &c. (which abominations and abominable persecutions through the grace of God I abhorred and shunned) suppose I say I had then walked in those evill paths. Should this be now urged to the disgrace of my present practise, most manifestly and directly contrary to such evils? Should it not rather be applied to the disgrace of that false way in which I then walked with you and other such? Doth not my present practise really manifest my abhorring of Time serving, and of having any fellowship with Popish innovations? If I could apply my selfe to Temporizing, and to a swallowing of false wayes, or but to a conniving at the same, I might (in all probability) as easily rise, and ruffle in silkes, as any of you. But I choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; and esteem the reproach of Christ far greater riches then the fattest Benefice, or largest Stipend.

And now tell me, Mr. Edwards, whether *Paul* when he was a baptized beleever, and a Servant of Iesus Christ, hating all Blasphemie, Persecution, and Injuriousnesse, might yet have been justly reproached by some, because he had sometimes been a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and Injurious. And if any of the false Apostles had in that respect dealt with him as you now deal (and that falsely too) with me, tell me whether they had not herein shewed themselves the servants of the Divell, rather then the servants of God.

I may not omit yet further to examine this passage in your slander, Against the will of the Bishop. Do you conceive that they

which swallowed the use of the Service book, communicated to Fornicatours, or covetous Persons, or Idolaters, or Railers, Drunkards, or Extortioners, and did many other acts of that nature, now knowne to bee hatefull unto GOD, may yett themselves to be excused, because though they did these things against the will of GOD, yet they did them not against the will of the Bishop? Will this serve their turne at the great day? Surely at that day neither the will of the Bishop heretofore, nor yett the will of any Assemblie or Presbyterie now will be found sufficient to bring men out in things not according to the will of GOD.

I cannot but take notice also of the titles which you give to *Hall*, in that your aggravation of the offence unjustly laid to charge; viz. The Bishop of Excester his Diocesan. This seemeth intimate that I was then bound to conform to the will of Dr. *H* because he was then the Bishop of Excester, my Diocesan. Do you yett acknowledge this to be a truth, that their Prelaticall Episcopacy was from man, not from GOD? If you do acknowledge, tell me by what Law of GOD, or by what Just Authority of man you were then bound to conform to the Bishops will. By these titles this given and made use of by you, you signifie how well you brooke that Episcopacy againe. Onely I suppose, you had not exercise that tyrannical power, then be under it.

I would next have it to be considered by what rule you call a meeting house; a Parish-Church. The word in Scripture is translated Church, useth to signifie *A congregation called out of the world to be Gods people; a company of people that are to be looked upon as sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints; 1 Cor. 1. 2.* By what authority do you give this title to an house made of stones and timber?

Perhaps you will say the word Church is (like the Scottish Kirk) derived from the Greek word *Kuriacos*, which signifies Lords; or appertaining to the Lord: and that you call these Churches, because they are the Lords Houses. But how came they to be the Lords Houses, more then any other houses? They were consecrated indeed by Popish Bishops, but though these Bishops derive their power from the Pope, & we know who gave to the Pope his power and his seate, and great authority, *Revel. 13. 2.* Yett all this power and authority is too weak, and too little, to make these houses the Lords houses. These houses were also dedicated to Saints &

nised (or approved) by the Pope. Yet this also is not sufficient to make them the Lords houses. The Latine Masse book (in the last age refined, and turned into an English service book) hath also been used in these houses as many times as there be untruths in your Catechism: and yet this also is not enough to make these houses the Lords houses. As it is not in the power of men, no not of the Pope, & all his Vassals, to make any place to be for ever the Devils house; for then many of these places had been made such: so neither is it in the power of men, no not of an Assemblie of Bishops or Presbyters, to make an house to be the Lords house.

The Temple at Jerusalem was indeed called the house of God, because it was a type of Christ, as our saviours words do intimate in *Ioh. 2. 19* Dare you to make these houses herein like unto the Temple? Dare you say that any house may now be looked upon as a temple of Christ? Or dare you say that one place may now be looked upon as more holy then another? Do you not know that this would found an implicate denying that Christ is come, and hath suffered in the flesh, and is risen againe according to the Scriptures? Do you not know what is written in *Ioh. 4. 21.* and what it meaneth? *I will that ye worship the Father. Do you not know the words of Paul in 1 Tim. 2. 8. I will that men pray in every place.* Do you not know that Christ took every opportunity in every place to preach his Gospel? do you not know that the Apostles did both preach, and pray, and break bread in such houses as you call private houses? do you not know that God neither puts difference now between place and place, nor gives to men any authority, warrant, or leave so to do? Yea, you know all these things. But if you should let the people know the same, your market were marred. 1. The glory of your preeminence in these supposed holy places, would then be darkned. 2. The people would not then reverence your Sermons whether true or false, whether sound or rotten) for the supposed holinesse of the place where they are preached. 3. You would not then be so able to stirre up the people to persecute us for preaching, and praying, and breaking bread in those houses in which we meet for the performance of these actions. Therefore you hide this truth from the peoples eyes.

But it may be you will say, that you call such an house, A Church,
by

by a figure: because the congregation that meets therein, is a Church. If so, then let it be considered: First, That no example in the word of God doth teach us so to speak. The word rendred Church in *1 Cor.* 11. 18. and 22. doth there signifie, not a meeting-place, but the congregation of christians. Secondly, That there is a great difference between a Parish Assemblies, and a Well ordered Church of Christ; which I thus prove.

1. It is a most evident thing, that the Parish Assemblies are not Congregations of Visible Saints; such as all true Churches are. *1 Cor.* 1. 2. and 14. 33. *1 The.* 2. 14.

2. It is also manifest that the Parish-Assemblies in this land in the dayes of Queene *Mary* (notwithstanding the Reformation in the *Edward's* dayes) were part of those many waters on which any Church Whore sitteth, *Revel.* 17. 1. 15. Then what kinde of Churches were they? And their state was no more changed afterwards by a new bringing in of the English Service-book in the roome of the Latine Masse book, then it was changed by the first bringing in of the same in King *Edward's* dayes.

3. The few beleivers that yet remaine in the Parish Assemblies being that people of God which are called out of Babilon, *Revel.* 18. 4. are not there in the right state of a Church, nor can they thereunto without comming out of it.

Here let it be laid to heart, that those Parish assemblies being perswaded that they are Churches of Christ, are hereby miserably hardened in pride and prophaneesse, and in security and presumption: whereby Satan is not a little strengthened to carrie them on with ease to eternall destruction. The motives to you and others to Perswade them notwithstanding to look upon themselves as Churches of God, do seem to be these.

1. By this meanes you seeme to obtaine the honour of Pastors of the Churches, as you call them.

2. Thus you seeme to have some colour to presse all the people to maintaine you by Tithes, or Oblations, or Stipends, &c.

3. You politickly foresee, that if you should declare according to truth these Assemblies to be no right Churches, then not only your honour, and your rich maintenance, and your Presbyterie would all fall to the ground, but also you must undergo contempt and persecution from the World. Hereupon (though it worke to their de-

all destruction) you bear them in hand that they are right Churches by all meanes; yea that their Infants are holy, and under the Covenant of grace; and that the very places where they do meet, must, or may be called by the name of Churches. O that you were sensible of the sinfulness, of this your dealing: But I now hasten to that which you yet further adde concerning me, and so to an end.

That which followes in your book, is this: *who hath put out a Pamphlet called, a Declaration concerning the Publike Dispute which should have been in the publike meeting-house of Aldermanburie the third of December, concerning Infants baptisme.*

I am not ashamed of the assistance that I gave in putting out that Declaration: what have you to say against it? Can you therein finde any one sentence swerving from the truth? If either you, or they that made a shew of a mind to dispute with us, could therein have found any fallhood, we should surely have heard of it long ago. But it is enough that your Gravity calls it, A Pamphlet. Indeed it is not very large: for it was not needfull; as we conceived, that it should be large. But though we there use not many words, yet we write the words of Truth and Soberness. And if you will blot out of your *Garganta* all the words of Fallhood and Folly with which it is stuffed, it will, I suppose, be much shorter then this Pamphlet.

Having thus answered those things in your book that do particularly concerne me, I will rake no further in such an unfavorable heape; But I desire that you your selfe may at the last be so sensible of the ill favour thereof, as that you may be moved to a loathing of it: and that you may not have a miserable experimentall knowledge of the truth, of that word of truth in *Prov. 29. 1. He that being often reproved, hardneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*



A Postscript to the Reader.

Courteous Reader,



Hough I have reprov'd Master Edm^d for giving this name, or title, *Church* an House made of Lime and Stone; desire thee not to judge me an approver of their practise, who now give such names to Houses that have been called *Churches* as tend only to the provoking, and exasperating of spirits that use to meet in them. I exceedingly approve of this name; *A publike meeting-house*. This would be found neither to favour superstition, neither yet to provoke mens spirits by any intimation of contempt.

Of those that yet use to hear and pray in those Houses there are many that give good evidences of sincerity. Why then should we unnecessarily imbitter them by our expressions? We are also to seek the salvation of those that are yet unconverted; why then should we needlessly provoke them to wrath, & so harden their hearts, stop their ears against our words? Also, in as much as they which yet meet in these Houses, are fellow-members together with us, of the same *Politick body*, and the

common enemy (seeking the destruction both of them and us) strives to set them at variance with us, that he may the more easily destroy both; it is therefore both just and necessary that they should finde us not onely faithfull to them in our dealings, but also respective, and not provoking in our expressions, we still being carefull to have no fellowship with any evill.

Moreover, I think it not unmeet to acknowledge by my pen, what I declare by my practise, *viz.* that I cannot see it to be an unlawfull thing, to preach or to pray in those houses; nor yet to heare in them, so far as it may be done without having any fellowship (either really, or in appearance) with any false Church-state, false Worship, false Doctrine, or false Ministry. I do not recede from my professed and utter disliking of their ill dealing, of their mis-applying (and so abusing) of the Scripture, which write upon the doors and wals of those houses: *This is the house of God. The Lord is in this place. My house shall be called the house of Prayer. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God. Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, the house of the God of Iacob, and the like.* Yea, because of this my spirit hath been, and still is, stirred with a me: even as it hath been a vexation to my spirit, to heare men say with relation to these houses, That they are now met in *Gods own house*; that he still keepes open the *doors of his sanctuary, &c.* But mens misnaming these places *the houses of God*, doth not make them to be the *houses of the Dwell*: no more then their mis-calling another place the *house of the Dwell*, can make it to be *the house of God*: Yea, as it is a great error to ascribe holinesse to these places, so it is also an error to imagine any unholinesse to be inherent in them. Even here we have need to be-
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ware of *Satans* wiles; and to take heed that he carry us from one extream to another, and to the unnecessary dangerous disturbance both of our selves & others. for our safety herein, let us be carefull that we swerve not from the rule of the Word, neither in Allowing, or ther yet in Condemning.

Thus *courteous Reader*, as I have now sincerely expressed my mind unto thee, so through the Grace of God I still remaine,

*A true seeker both of thy temporall
and eternall peace.*

Benjamin Cox

A second Postscript.

Such was the cautiousnesse of that friend, for whom this book is printed, that he would not have it to be printed for him without License : and such was the cautiousnesse of the Licenser, that he would not license it without some alterations. This hath caused this printed coppie to fall a little short of that which I wrote, *viz.* in these places, *Pag. 9. Line 11.* as you by your writing now appeare to be) my coppie added : a persecutor of the people of God. *Pag. 12. line. 5, 6, 7.* That there is a great difference between a Parish-Assemblee, & a well ordered Church of Christ. I wrote, That there is as a great a difference between a Parish-Assemblee, and a true Church of Christ, as between Babilon and Sion. *Line 14.* Then what kinde of Churches were they ? I had written; Then certainly they were not true Churches. *Line 21, 22.* Are not there in the right state of a Church, nor can attaine therunto without comming out of it. I wrote; Are not there in the state of a Church, nor can attain therunto; without comming out of Babilon. *Line 23, 24.* Those Parish-Assemblies because perswaded. I wrote. being falsly perswaded. *Line 28, 29.* As right Churches. I wrote, As Churches. *Line 30, 31.* Of pastors of the Churches, as you call them. I wrote, Of pastors of supposed Churches. *Line 35.* No right Churches. I wrote, No true Churches. *Pag. 13. line 1.* That they are right Churches. I wrote, That they are Churches, &c. Thus courteous Reader, thou hast now the whole of that which was written, and given forth to be printed upon this Subject, by thy loving friend.

B. C.